

One for the books

Whatever may happen in the future, the Libertarian Party is now assured at least a passing mention in the history books. For on December 18, 1972, Roger Lea MacBride of Charlottesville, Virginia, a member of the successful slate of Nixon electors from that State, broke ranks and cast his Electoral Vote for Dr. John Hospers and Ms. Tonie Nathan. As a result, the final results of the 1972 Presidential Election became officially recorded as Nixon 520, McGovern 17, and Hospers 1 -- and the LP suddenly achieved instant national recognition, receiving coverage on all three TV networks, in Newsweek, and in newspapers all over the country.

MacBride, a lifelong Republican, announced his decision to switch from Nixon to Hospers by saying that it was "an attempt to put principles ahead of party politics," explaining that he could not in good conscience vote for Nixon because "he has moved the government toward ever greater control over the lives of us all," and that by doing what he did, he hoped to tell Nixon that "he has lost his way."

The story of MacBride's historic decision broke in newspapers across the country on the day that the Electors met in their respective State capitols, via a syndicated column by Nicholas Von Hoffman of the Washington Post. In his column, which was pro-MacBride, Von Hoffman discussed the implications of MacBride's action in some depth and needled the GOP for its lack of perception in failing to recognize that Roger MacBride was not just another party hack when they chose him to be a member of their Virginia slate of Electors. (Ironically, MacBride was originally offered the position because he had written a book on the Electoral College.)

Roger's commitment to libertarian ideals goes back much farther than 1972, incidentally; he is the grandson of noted libertarian writer Rose Wilder Lane, and was one of the founders of the Free Enterprise Society at Princeton during his college days in the late 1940's.

His action, although not unprecedented, was of historical significance for several reasons. First, because there have only been nine previous cases in the 150-year history of the Electoral College when an Elector has "jumped ship" (and interestingly, two of them were Nixon electors in 1960 and 1968, making Nixon the only three-time loser in history). Second, because MacBride's move made Tonie Nathan the first and only woman ever to receive an

Electoral Vote. And third, because the Hospers-Nathan ticket is only the seventh minority-party ticket to receive any Electoral Votes in this century (the Communists and Socialists, in contrast, have never received an Electoral Vote).

As soon as the news of MacBride's action went out, calls and letters began to pour into his Charlottesville office, with Dr. Hospers, Ms. Nathan, and National LP also receiving quite a number. LP members everywhere were naturally elated, and many of them have tried to express the delight they felt upon first hearing of MacBride's action. Nobody has said it better than Sam Kazman of New York, however, who sent the following letter to Roger. We think he speaks for all of us.

Mr. Roger MacBride,
Elector Par Excellence

Dear Mr. MacBride:

BRAVO! That is, I find it impossible to adequately describe the joy I felt, or the whoop I let out, upon hearing of your action on the Monday night CBS News. Here I was in my living room, and here it was all dark and gloomy outside, and here was Walter Cronkite doing what I've seen and heard him do so many times before. And then this. Oh Jesus Christ!

So the first thing I did was to yell and holler and clap my hands in disbelief. And then I called some people I knew, who had either gone for Nixon with their nostrils stoppered, or who, like myself, had watched their Hospers write-ins vanish into the obscure categories of "Void" or "Scattered." And they all hollered some more and phoned some more people. A bright network of non-believers for whom Christmas had come early. Amazing!

What can I say to you? Who are you? Were you planning to do this all along? If not, what changed your mind? Do you still have a future in the Republican Party? Do we still have a future in the Libertarian Party? Oh do we ever!

I'm sending you some leaflets put out by our group here. Of course, you don't need propagandizing, but it's nice to see other people thinking what you're thinking. ("Psychological visibility", Branden would

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ELECTORAL REFORM - AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PROGRESS

As a result of Roger MacBride's history-making action on December 18, there is once again a hue and cry throughout the land to abolish the Electoral College and have our Presidents elected by direct popular vote.

Senator Birch Bayh (D-Ind) has announced that he will re-introduce into Congress a proposed Constitutional amendment to this effect; he tried this once before, in 1969, and was nearly successful in getting the two-thirds majority in both Houses that is necessary for a Constitutional amendment to be formally sent to the state legislatures for ratification. This time, it seems almost certain that the Bayh Amendment will get through Congress, and perhaps through the state legislatures as well.

It is certainly debatable whether such a change would be a good thing; Roger MacBride, for one, has assembled cogent arguments to the effect that it would not. Nonetheless, since it now appears that direct election of Presidents may well become a reality, we would be foolish not to try to take advantage of the current "reform" attempts, to advance one of our own goals -- namely, making it easier for minority parties to get on the ballot.

The simplest way for us to achieve this goal, it seems to your editor, would be to persuade Senator Bayh to add to his proposed amendment an additional section or sections containing the following provisions:

1) That all minority parties whose Presidential candidates received 1,000,000 votes or more in a given Presidential election shall automatically be entitled to have their Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates listed on the ballots of all 50 States and the District of Columbia in the next election.

2) That all other minority parties shall be entitled to have their Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates listed on the ballots of all 50 States and the District of Columbia by filing one petition, containing 100,000 signatures, with the Federal Election Commission -- and that the FEC shall provide all interested parties with the necessary petition forms at least five months prior to Election Day, allowing at least two months for the collection of signatures.

3) That only those Presidential candidates who are granted ballot listings under one of these two provisions shall be regarded as "real" Presidential candidates, in the senses of being eligible to receive media time under the "equal time" provision, and being required to file campaign expenditure reports with the various authorities.

This arrangement would obviously be of great benefit to us, and to the other minority parties, in two respects. First, it would

eliminate the tremendous hassle of having to get on each state's ballot separately. And second, it would multiply our effective vote-getting potential by a factor of approximately ten; an analysis of the number of votes received by our candidates and those of the other minority parties last November reveals that being on the ballot increases a minority party candidate's vote total tenfold, compared to a write-in effort.

Thus, we strongly urge each and every one of you to write to Senator Bayh (United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510), urging him to add these provisions, and stating that you will work actively on behalf of his amendment if and only if he does so. Copies should be sent to your own Senators and Congressman, and to your local newspapers. THIS IS PROBABLY THE MOST IMPORTANT THING YOU CAN DO TO ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF THE LIBERTARIAN PARTY THIS YEAR. So, even if you don't do a single other thing this year, take the time to make this one effort!

Now, obviously, the fact that these provisions will help minority parties isn't going to cut much ice with Senator Bayh and his colleagues. However, there are a number of points which can be made that should have some effect on them. Some of these are given below, and you might wish to cite one or more of them (using your own words) in your letter -- along with any others you can think of.

A) The present system discriminates against those Americans who do not favor either of the two major parties; in effect, it denies them of their right to vote for the candidates of their choice. And there are an increasing number of people who fall into this category; in the '72 Presidential election, a record-breaking 44% of those eligible to vote did not do so.

B) As the constantly-increasing "no vote" figure indicates, people are becoming more and more frustrated with our system of government. And the more difficult it is for people to express their discontents through the peaceful means of voting, the more likely they are to turn to non-peaceful means. Thus, making it easier for minority parties to get on the ballot will help "cool things off."

C) The present system in effect grants a monopoly to the two major parties. If there were an industry in which two companies had managed to place legal blocks to entry on the part of competitors, the government would never allow the situation to persist--so why should the two major parties be allowed to do it?

D) As things currently stand, there is no uniformity in the various States' ballots; some list only the two major parties, others listed up to seven minor parties last time. This means that people in different States are, in effect, voting on a different basis, even though they're voting on the same offices. We don't have different ballots in each county of a given State, for the State-wide races (e.g. Senator), so why should the requirements for listing for national office vary from State to State?

E) The system described above is fair and reasonable, in that it makes it possible for parties with a fair amount of support to get on the ballot, but eliminates "crank" candidates with only a handful of followers.

F) The provision that only the candidates qualifying for 50-State listing be eligible for "equal time" and required to submit expenditure reports would eliminate a great deal of work for the FCC and the Federal Election Commission, and would make it easier for the media to know which candidates to cover (i.e. only those who had a significant number of supporters).

G) If a few minority parties were on the ballot -- and probably no more than four or five would qualify -- it would give the major parties a good idea of how well they were responding to the desires of the American people; the larger the number of votes the minority parties drew, the better an indication there would be that the major parties were out of touch with the people -- and this "feedback" would enable them to change their own positions. Furthermore, if all significant minority parties are on the ballot, they will not be able to claim to speak for more people than they actually do represent, saying "only a fraction of our supporters were allowed to vote for us."

There are probably other points which can be raised with equal effectiveness; if you can think of any, by all means, use them. The most important thing is to write to Senator Bayh -- now, before his amendment gets approved by Congress in its present form. And get as many other people as you can to write also.

Green Sheet Update

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TANSTAAFL

MACBRIDE (Continued from Page 1)

call it. "Love") Enjoy them. May they make you one-thousandth as happy as you've made us. I hope you live forever.

Yours,

Sam Kazman

As for the reactions of the Establishment, they were (Predictably) less ecstatic; we understand that when Spiro Agnew announced the official tally when the Electoral Votes were counted in the US Senate on January 6, he acted considerably less than pleased when he had to read off the one Hospers-Nathan vote.



All in all, Roger MacBride's glorious gesture was a tremendous treat -- the frosting on the whole '72 campaign cake, as it were. Many thanks, Roger ... and what are you doing in '76?

← ROGER L. MACBRIDE

Spotlight on State Parties

The ARIZONA Party will hold a convention on February 24th, to adopt a Constitution and By-Laws, and elect officers. Sixty-six delegates were registered at last count, with a number of observers and guests also expected to attend. NEW JERSEY is also planning a convention for that date, with 30-plus expected.

LOUISIANA held its convention on January 13, with 21 delegates present; press coverage was good. No word in yet from HAWAII, which had its convention scheduled for January, also.

ALASKA convention planned for February 17-19 (Brrr!); they hope to have Tonie Nathan as a guest speaker. ALASKA, incidentally, had the highest per-capita vote for Hospers-Nathan of any write-in State. NEW HAMPSHIRE was second.

Georgiann Trammell of TEXAS will be representing the LP at the upcoming get-together of the National Women's Political Caucus; she tried to get Tonie Nathan a speaking spot, but they were already booked up.

ILLINOIS recently hosted Tibor Machan in a presentation on Human Rights, held at Loyola University; turnout was approx. 100. Next project: an investment seminar, with emphasis on gold. They hope to have nationally-known speakers, and draw in members of the business community.

In NEW YORK, Sanford P. Cohen has already announced for the '74 Congressional race in the 25th District (Poughkeepsie). NY Party now has a real office, too!

POLITICAL PERSPECTIVE

IX. BLUNDERING TOWARDS THE MILLENIUM

or

HAVE THINGS FINALLY STOPPED GETTING WORSE?

It is the fashion, in libertarian circles, to continuously bemoan the current state of affairs, wailing almost incessantly that every day brings us closer to the Final Collapse or the Death of Freedom. And, undeniably, things have been going downhill; there is no question that we have less freedom today than we did ten, twenty, or sixty years ago.

But we must not let this generally justifiable lack of sanguinity become an unshakable habit. Favorable developments do occur, occasionally. And lately there have been more than is usually the case -- so many, in fact, that we may perhaps hope that things have "bottomed out," and that while they may not get better, on balance, in the foreseeable future, at least they may have stopped getting worse.

To be sure, the picture is by no means entirely rosy. The Nixon Administration's accelerating crusade to manage the national media, for example, is certainly a development to be viewed with alarm. And the proposed Federal Budget for the upcoming fiscal year is (as usual) a New World's Record. Nonetheless, a lot of relatively nice things have happened in the last few months, and in toto they are cause for at least some minor rejoicing.

First, of course, is the fact that the ghastly Vietnam War now appears to really be headed for a conclusion, complete with a return of American prisoners, and an end (at least temporarily) of the hideous Selective Slavery System. Indeed, it appears that America may now be entering a new era of military isolationism. Nixon as much as said so in his Inaugural speech, and while RMN is certainly not the most trustworthy of men, one suspects that he correctly senses that the American people are fed to the gills with global adventurism.

On the economic front, recent weeks have witnessed several advances. In a tacit admission that wage/price controls were a complete failure, our Fuhrer has effectively thrown in the towel; we're not out of the woods yet, but at least we're heading in the right direction. And in a surprisingly rational move to force prices down the only way they can effectively be forced down -- i.e. through decontrolling the market, and thus increasing competition -- the Administration is lifting a number of import quotas. Restrictions against American citizens owning gold may soon be lifted, also ... although there will probably be a whopping tax on transactions.

In another unexpectedly rational move, the rising cost of food is being combatted the right way -- by getting rid of farm subsidies. There is serious talk of letting that great White Elephant, Amtrak, die a natural death at the end of this fiscal year. And -- will wonders never cease -- Richard Nixon actually said something positively libertarian in his Inaugural address; hard to believe though it may be, he really did say "Ask not what your government can do for you; ask rather what you can do for yourself." I hardly could have said it better myself. Now, if only he means it.

Even in the area of civil liberties, all is not bleak. The Supreme Court's ruling on abortion is a real milestone; whether or not one approves of abortions, one cannot help but be elated that our highest court actually went on record as saying that people should have dominion over their own bodies, and that it is none of the government's damn business what they do to themselves (at least in certain cases). Nice going, Supremes. Now, how about applying the same logic to sex laws, drug laws, and idiotic proposals like compulsory installation of airbags in automobiles? Heck, fellas, even Bill Buckley has now come out in favor of decriminalizing the possession of grass.

It would be tempting to believe that all of these promising developments (or likely developments) are the result of a conversion to libertarianism on the part of our rulers. Unfortunately, that almost certainly is not the explanation; they're almost certainly the same old pragmatists they always were, and are doing the right things simply because they've tried everything else, and nothing else has worked. Still, it is nice that although they may still be blundering about aimlessly, at least they're now blundering in the right direction.

And, although we certainly can't claim that they've started to act more libertarian because of the influence libertarians have had on mass opinion, our efforts have undoubtedly helped. Hospers' one Electoral Vote and semi-libertarian Schmitz's million popular votes surely didn't go completely unnoticed. And the reluctant conversion of people like Bill Buckley to a less un-libertarian position than they formerly held is almost certainly due at least in part to their realization that the libertarian movement has been siphoning off some of their supporters.

So, although the battle is far from over, it appears that we may now have reached a point where it is appropriate to quote Sir Winston Churchill's remark upon hearing of the first Allied victory in Africa: "This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning."

— DFN

We are pleased to announce that for the first time ever, the current issue of LP News has a circulation greater than that of the current issue of LIFE. Onward and Upward!

BITS & PIECES

THE LIBERTY AMENDMENT

Enclosed with this issue you will find a card giving the full text of the proposed Liberty Amendment to the US Constitution, and a brief summary of what its passage would accomplish, economically. The Liberty Amendment is endorsed in our 1972 Platform, and has been described by no less an authority than Murray Rothbard as "magnificently libertarian." The Liberty Amendment Committee, which is the organization behind this proposal, is -- depending on how you look at it -- either the most libertarian of the conservative groups in America, or the most conservative of the libertarian groups. We highly recommend the Liberty Amendment as a project for State LPs in this non-election year, and suggest that all interested LP members contact the LAC to find out who to get in touch with in their area; LA supporters should be good prospects for recruitment, too.

"THE YOUNG PAY FOR THE OLD"

That's the title of a revealing article in the January 14 issue of the New York Times Magazine, dealing with the myths of Social "Security." Its author, a liberal, debunks the old lie that SS is an "insurance" program, and says it's time we openly admit that it's nothing more than another tax. He happens to favor the whole idea of Social Security, but the article is a good source of ammunition for arguments against it -- especially considering where it appeared.

LIBERTARIAN POSTERS

A series of high-quality posters, dealing with issues ranging from ecology to free enterprise is now being offered by the Campus Studies Institute, 11722 Sorrento Valley Road, San Diego CA 92121. These are available at no cost to students and faculty members (in reasonable quantities); for others, there is a small charge. Free samples and price list on request.

LIBERTARIAN CALENDAR

A very professionally-executed calendar featuring photos of libertarian heroes and giving the dates of over 250 historical events of interest is available for \$2.50 (two for \$4.50) from the Laissez Faire Book Store, 208A Mercer Street, New York NY 10012. The pages for the month of June feature a photo of 1972 LP campaign material, in commemoration of our first National Convention.

MEDICAL CARE IS A RIGHT ...

A Refutation by Robert M. Sade is reprinted from the New England Journal of Medicine by the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons (2111 Enco Drive, Suite N-515, Oak Brook, IL 60521). There is no charge for one copy; quantity prices on request. Highly recommended.

'73 CONVENTION TO BE HELD IN CLEVELAND, JUNE 8-10

Cleveland, Ohio has been selected as the site of this year's National Convention; as reported in the last Newsletter, this year's get-together will occur on June 8, 9 and 10. Reserve those dates now; full details on accommodations, program and registration will be in the next Newsletter.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICES

... and subscription expiration notices are being mailed to those of you whose memberships and subscriptions are due for renewal as of this issue. Those of you who don't receive one this time will receive it when the appropriate time arrives. We hope each and every one of you will renew your membership, and bring in an extra member or two with you.

A LITTLE HELP FROM OUR FRIENDS ...

We would like to belatedly thank AGAINST THE WALL (PO Box 444, Westfield NJ 07091) for their endorsement of the Hospers/Nathan ticket and also for their reprinting of the entire Platform in their issue No. 2. For a sample copy of this new libertarian publication, send 25¢ to the address above.

We have also had many inquiries as a result of a mention of the Party in THE INTERNATIONAL HARRY SCHULTZ LETTER, #289. Our economic and gold positions were cited.

LIFE MEMBERS

Since our last report, we have two new Life Members and one Life Sustaining Member. In addition to holding Life Memberships, Freeman Fox of Arizona and Edmund Contoski of Minnesota are serving as chairmen of their respective states. Bruce J. Cameron of Arizona is our new Life Sustaining Member. We offer our special thanks to these three individuals for their support.

CORRECTION CONCERNING RAND LETTER

The following statement has been submitted by Paul Hodgson:

"The ExecComm motion for a letter to Ayn Rand called for a 'reply to her recent criticisms and attacks on the LP', and specified the questions of: (a) 'prematurity' of political action, (b) LP opposition to RMN, and (c) validity of LP principles and objectives; and of whether she would reconsider supporting our effort to provide a principled alternative to statism while there is still time.

"I don't propose to 'point out her inconsistencies in endorsing Nixon' (per se) or to ask her 'to explain her position' (cf. last Newsletter). That would be an exercise in futility; I hardly expect her to even read the letter which I have drafted if it is sent. It is a statement for the record."

Declare Your Independence

One dollar less for the government, one dollar more for the Party

This year, for the first time, you have the opportunity to keep one dollar of your taxes out of Uncle Sam's pockets, and put it into the Libertarian Party's treasury. With your 1972 Federal Income Tax forms, you will find included a new item -- Form 4875, a piece of paper you can fill out and attach to your other forms, to let the Feds know that one dollar of the money they are stealing from you is not to be put into the general boodle-basket, but rather is to be set aside in a special fund to be disbursed to the 1976 Presidential candidates.

All you have to do is fill in Libertarian Party in the appropriate blank, supply your name and SS number, and sign and date it. If you're filing a joint return, husband and wife may both file Form 4875 with their return.

Don't pass up this opportunity to make Uncle Sam a dollar poorer, and the LP a dollar richer!

Latest Hospers-Nathan vote figures

Several members have written to National HQ asking us to explain the discrepancy between our estimate of 5000+ votes cast for the Hospers-Nathan ticket last November, and the figure of 2,648 reported in a UPI story sent out in late December.

The 2,648 figure represents only the votes received by Hospers and Nathan in the two states where the LP ticket was on the ballot -- 1,537 in Washington and 1,111 in Colorado. In addition, we now have the following figures for write-ins: California 980, Texas 394, New Hampshire 142, Wisconsin 101, Alaska 68, Illinois 46, Massachusetts 43, Missouri 25 and Utah 19. These bring the total to 4,466.

We also know that in many States (e.g. New York) our write-ins were not counted at all, and that in others, they were tallied only sporadically. Thus, we still feel confident that the actual total number cast was over 5,000 ... although we will never know exactly how many, for sure.

The exact number is unimportant, in any case; we were not trying to roll up votes, but rather to spread libertarian ideas, and to lay the groundwork for effective political action in future years. And in these respects, we succeeded.

We suggest that if anyone asks you how many votes we got in '72, you simply say "approximately 5,000" and let it go at that.

The truth about Congress

Or at least an approximation thereof, can be gleaned from two recently-issued "score-sheets". In the November issue of the

radical Libertarian Forum, there is a tally of the Senate, based on 45 unidentified votes, and in the October 25 issue of the conservative Review of the News, there are ratings of members of both houses, based on 10 identified votes in each case.

Comparing the two Senate tallies, we find that six of the LF's top eleven are the same as six of RN's top eleven -- these being Byrd, Fannin, Curtis, Buckley, Hansen and Jordan. LF's other five are Roth, Ervin, Dominick, Proxmire, and Brock, while RN gives the nod to Tower, Stennis, Bennett, Allen, and Gambrell. LF's six "worsts" are Inouye, McIntyre, Williams (NJ), Jackson, Stevens, and Stafford, all of whom also score very poorly (20% or less) on the RN tally. Both LF and RN give low-to-abysmal ratings to a majority of the Senate.

Although these ratings are probably not 100% in accordance with those we would assign if we made our own tally, they give a rough indication of who the best and worst cases are. Fortunately, we will not have to rely on second-hand appraisals much longer; Eric Scott Royce, our Region 7 ExecComm member, has volunteered to compile ratings of both Houses from now on, and we will thus have our own "report card" starting later this year.

Sharing the responsibilities

The LP has now grown to the point that we cannot efficiently handle all National business out of our Westminster office. For this reason, each member of the National ExecComm has been assigned certain responsibilities. Some of these assignments are purely internal-administrative in nature, but several are of the sort that you, the members, can be of help in performing.

FUND-RAISING D. Frank Robinson will be working on ways to raise money for the Party. If you have any ideas, or know of someone who might be a good bet for a big contribution, contact Frank.

PRESS RELATIONS Mark Frazier of Massachusetts will be handling our nation press releases from now on. If you know of any libertarian-leaning people in media, send their name and address (along with an indication of what paper or radio/TV station they represent) to Mark.

V.I.P. LETTERS Liz Jacobsen and John Taylor in California will be writing letters to any public figure who seems to be a good prospect for conversion to libertarianism. Any time you hear or read of someone who looks like a good prospect, send all available info (clippings, address, etc.) to John or Liz.

Addresses of the above are on your Green Sheet.

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